DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 252 658 CE 040 193

AUTHOR Ellis, Jeanine
TITLE A History and Analysis of the Adult Education Act, 1964-1984.
PUB DATE 24 Oct 84
NOTE 21p.
PUB TYPE Information Analyses (070)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Adult Basic Education; Block Grants; *Educational Legislation; *Educational Policy; Elementary Education; Federal Aid; *Federal Legislation; Federal State Relationship; Financial Support; Government School Relationship; *Policy Formation; Political Issues; Public Policy; States Powers; Trend Analysis
IDENTIFIERS *Adult Education Act; *Economic Opportunity Act 1964; Legislative History

ABSTRACT

The Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, which was the first piece of legislation to provide for basic literacy training to adults, was passed as a result of a number of factors, including socioeconomic conditions, the influence of the media, and the political astuteness of President Lyndon B. Johnson. As a redistributive policy, the Economic Opportunity Act and the Adult Basic Education (ABE) Program were designed to attack both the roots and consequences of poverty by developing employment opportunities, improving productivity, and enhancing the quality of life. Although a rational strategy was originally used to formulate ABE programming and policy, the decision-making process surrounding ABE has been filled with trade-offs and bargaining, thus resulting in incremental outcomes. Whereas the original authorization of ABE in the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 gave much discretion to state and local agencies, the 1978 Amendments to the Adult Education Act established expenditures for target populations and described how the program would reach those groups who needed ABE most. This trend toward more directive legislation was reversed in the 1984 Amendments to the Adult Education Act, which were intended to streamline ABE and give states more discretion to operate their own ABE programs based on their individual needs. (MN)

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ED252658

A History and Analysis of the Adult Education Act 1964-1984

Prepared by:

Jeanine Ellis

October 24, 1984

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When Congress passed The Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, PL 88-452, (Title II-B contained federal aid to states to provide basic literacy training to adults) it represented the first major legislative victory for President Lyndon B. Johnson in carrying out his "war on poverty" program as well as a victory for supporters of the Adult Basic Education (ABE) Program who, for the past two years, had been unsuccessful in convincing Congress to pass it as a separate bill. Even though the (ABE) Program has been revised, it has retained its basic thrust: to offer adults the opportunity to develop basic skills in reading, writing, language, and arithmetic in order to obtain or retain employment and otherwise participate as productive and responsible citizens.

President John F. Kennedy's February 6, 1962 and January 29, 1963 education addresses to Congress requested legislation to combat adult literacy and bills were introduced in both the 87th and 88th Congress but were never enacted. In fact, very few of President Kennedy's education proposals were adopted as outside influences (riots caused by school integregation, and religious fights over a court ruling on school prayer) forced the Administration to abandon efforts to push education bills.

Inside Congress, members complained that the administration sent up too many education bills (such as aid to private schools and colleges and special help for Negroes) without establishing priorites. The literacy proposal had the misfortune of being associated with the Administration's civil rights proposal

introduced in the 87th Congress which would have made a sixth grade education sufficient proof of literacy for voting. That proposal died in a Senate filibuster. Consequently, Rules Committee Chairman Howard W. Smith (D-VA), a conservative Democrat, refused to give either literacy bill a rule to send it to the House floor.

A number of factors were responsible for final passage of the adult literacy legislation. These were related to socioeconomic conditions including the nation's civil rights movement which demanded an end to social, political, and economic discrimination; the influence of the media (several books, TV documentaries, and other reports were issued in the early 60's calling attention to the plight of the poor and their lack of adequate educational opportunities); and, most importantly, the political astuteness of President Lyndon B. Johnson in using these factors to push his proposal.

Anticipating a huge ideological battle over his plan (typical of a redistributive policy), President Johnson lined up support from members of his administration and Congress. He also used key symbols, full of emotion (war on poverty, etc.), to turn his proposal into an emotional issue. As the initiator of the policy (it is an example of the mobilization model of agenda formation), President Johnson set the stage in which to move the issue swiftly from the formal agenda to the systemic agenda to "sell it" to Congress and (automatically) the general public.

In his State of the Union message to Congress on January 8,

1964, President Johnson declared an "unconditional war on poverty in America." In a followup, the Council of Econmic Advisers January 20, 1964 transmitted their annual report to Congress which included a chapter on the problem of poverty in the U.S. President Johnson then used their report as a forum for his own proposal.

When he submitted his budget to Congress it included his plan to attack the "vicious cycle of chronic poverty." In a special education address to Congress on March 16, the President outlined his poverty program and accompanied it with a draft of his proposal, the Economic Opportunity Act. On the same day, his proposal was introduced in the House by Representative Phil M. Landrum (D-GA) as HR 10440 and in the Senate by Senator Pat McNamara (D-MI) and 35 others, as S. 2642.

Anticipating a problem from Conservative House members, especially in the Rules Committee, President Johnson convinced Landrum to sponsor the House bill because of the conservative Southern support he could provide. To solidify support, he appointed R. Sargent Shriver, Jr., (Director of the Peace Corps) to serve as Special Assistant to the President to help formulate the "war on poverty." As Special Assistant Shriver was responsible for preparing the poverty program and the bill. Shriver also assumed a key position in implementing the poverty program when President Johnson announced publicly that he intended to appoint Shriver as Director of the new Office of Economic Opportunity (to implement the anti-poverty program) if the bill was enacted.

Instead of regular subcommittee action, an Ad Hoc Subcommittee on the Poverty War Program was established. In the House it was chaired by Rep. Adam C. Powell (Chairman of the full committee). In the Senate, McNamara, sponsor of S. 2642, was chairman. This method allowed the chairman to increase the support for and contain the opposition to the anti-poverty bill. Opening testiomony on HR 10440 came from Sargent Shriver who defended the proposal as a comprehensive plan focused on the poor and representing the consensus of many groups and individuals. Shriver was accompanied by Walter Heller, chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers. Several Administration officials testified including seven cabinet members.

When the committee Democrats caucused in May, they added language authorizing the ABE Program (as Part II-B) at the request of Rep. Carl Perkins, a committee member who had introduced a similar proposal in the 87th Congress. A similar proposal was added to the Senate bill.

Both bills passed the committee by party line vote and floor debate on the measures was highly partisan. In both houses, a conservative coalition of Republicans and Southern Democrats directly attacked the issue on the basis of states rights, and its duplication of other poverty programs and attempted to reduce the authority of the Director of the OEO by direct attack --they called him a "czar." Failing that, they claimed the bill didn't go far enough in helping the elderly poor. In the House, this coalition was led by Rep. Peter Frelinghuysen, ranking minority member of the education committee, and in the Senate by

Senator Barry Goldwater (R-AR). Tradeoffs were made on both sides to assure passage of the conference report and the bill was signed by President Johnson August 20, 1964.

As a redistributive policy, the Economic Opportunity Act and the Adult Basic Education (ABE) Program were designed to redistribute wealth and education to the poor and undereducated people of the nation (the have-nots). The bill was designed to attack both the roots and consequences of poverty by developing employment opportunities, improving productivity, and improving the quality of life. In effect, the ABE program redistributed money from kindergarten-12th grade to undereducated adults (parents frequently) by giving them a second chance to return to school. The bill's goals not only reflected the Democratic Party philosophy (of providing a full education to every citizen to the limits of his capability) but had a great deal of social significance, sailience, temporal relevance, and overall "goodness" (without being technical) to increase its chances for passage (concept of an expanded public).

The (ABE) proposal gained a significant advantage in being attached to the anti-poverty bill since it had not garnered enough widespread support for passage on its own. Most education groups were small. Prior to the ABE Program, efforts in basic instruction were limited to large cities, such as New York, to address the growing problem of Immigrants. Large education groups such as the National Education Association were more interested in general school or college aid. Conservatives and Republicans claimed it would overlap the Manpower

Development and Training Act which provided training to unemployed and underemployed workers (in their minds, a clear precedent had been set). Over the years the constitutency of the program has grown from public assistance, social service agency, local government, business, and industry representatives (who testified in support of the original bill) to state and local directors of adult education. In addition, the program has had the support of key leaders in Congress, such as Rep. Perkins, a former teacher, and Senator Claiborne Pell (D-RI), chairman of the senate subcommittee on education.

The bill reflects a mixed scanning approach as over the years elements of the rational model and incremental model have been used. Nonetheless, only incremental changes have occurred, despite block grant proposals by two Republican presidents, Nixon and Reagan, which would have fundamentally changed the program. A rational decision-making model was used in developing the program. The original bill clearly defined the problem and the objectives needed to solve it. Alternatives were examined as options in formulating the bill by considering which agencies would be involved, who would be served and where, and how the service would be provided. The legislation mandated projects for staff training, realizing the need for a pool of trained teachers to provide special instruction to undereducated adults. In formulating the policy, legislators realized (in reading reports and hearing testimony) that if nothing was done, the problem would get worse and tailored their program so it would have a significant effect on adult illiteracy. To

maximize the opportunity for all adults, enrollment was geared to those most in need and expenditures were established to limit the amount of funds which could be spent on various groups and instructional services.

The original legislation, fairly short in length, gave much discretion to the state and local agencies. Each state was given relative freedom to establish and operate its program based on its own needs, subject to approval. As a result of the 1978 amendments, the program became more directive. Amendments were adopted which established expenditures for target populations and described how the program would reach those groups most in need in order to re-emphasize the program's fundamental purpose: to provide adult basic education for the least educated and most in need. At the same time, the amendments authorized a three-year state plan, rather than a one-year plan in order to reduce unnecessary paperwork. The 1984 amendments, typical of a Republican Administration, were designed to streamline the program and give states more discretion.

Overall, although a rational strategy was used to formulate the program, it has generally been replaced with incremental strategies. Furthermore, the decision-making process has been filled with trade-offs and bargaining, resulting in incremental outcomes. If the same strategy is continued in the future, the program should not look significantly different in the next 20 years.

Legislative History of Adult Education Legislation: 1964-1984

Adult Education Act of 1962 (87th Congress, 2nd session)

HR 10191, introduced by Rep. Carl Perkins (D-KY) on February 12, 1962 and referred to the Committee on Labor and Public Welfare.

* Hearings were held February 14, 15, 16, 19, and 23.
* Committee met and ordered favorably a revised bill, HR 10896, introduced March 23 by Rep. Perkins
* House Report #1551 filed April 2
* No rule granted; bill dies

HR 10896 would have provided grants to states to implement instructional programs to adults (18 years or older) who are unable to read and write English and who have not completed the sixth grade of school or achieved the equivalent level of education.

The bill would have encouraged colleges and universities to develop intructional materials to assist in the development of programs of specialized training for teachers of educationally deprived adults. It was designed to "remedy a serious national problem". Testimony showed that an estimated 12 million adults lacked a 6th grade education.

Adult Education Act of 1963 (88th Congress, 1st session)

HR 5422 introduced by Rep. George E. Brown, Jr. (D-CA) on April 9, 1963 and reported to Committee on Labor and Public Welfare.

* Hearings were held in May and June
* House Report #638 filed August 6, 1963
* No rule granted

HR 5542 would have provided grants to states for instruction of adults 16 years or older who could not read or write English and had not completed the eighth grade.

Testimony from U.S. Commissioner of Education Francis Keppel revealed that ABE is the foundation upon which any program to train or retrain large groups of unemployed adults must be built. ABE was seen as both the door to vocational training and the path away from chronic social dependence, unemployment, and personal deprivation." He also said that coping with the problems of undereducation among adults has been reflected in recent reports of unemployment and an overwhelming rise in welfare costs.

A New York City study in 1957, of ADC mothers, showed the greatest incidence of poverty, disease, preventable accidents, and personal maladjustment in occupational, home, and civic life is among the least educated.

Louisiana educators testified that the ABE program would be very cost effective. States were estimated to receive about a $4.50 return from every dollar they invested in the program through increased sales tax alone.

Opposing testimony from the minority stated it would duplicate the Manpower Development and Training Act recently passed by Congress which provided unemployed or underemployed workers with training for employment.

Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 (88th Congress, 2nd Session)

House action:
HR 10440 introduced by Rep. Phil M. Landrum (D-GA) on March 16 and referred to Committee on Labor and Public Welfare.

* Hearings were held March 17-April 28
* Committee report #1458 filed on June 3; clean bill introduced by Rep. Landrum, HR 11377 (containing II-B section)
* Reported to House June 3; blocked by Rules Committee for almost two months by House Rules Committee Chairman Smith and other conservatives. Action switches to Senate.
* S. 2642 is amended and passed (in lieu of HR 11377) on August 8 by 226-185 vote.

Testimony in support of HR 10440 came from R. Sargent Shriver, Special Assistant; Walter Heller, chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers, seven cabinet members: Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara, Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare Anthony Celebrezze, Secretary of Labor Willard Wirtz, Secretary of Commerce Luther H. Hodges, Secretary of Agriculture Orville L. Freeman, Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy, and Secretary of the Interior Steward L. Udall; the National Farmers Union, National Grange, National Urban League, National Council of Churches, American Public Welfare Association, the National Association of Social Workers, the NEA, the NAACP, big city mayors (from New York, Chicago, Detroit, Syracuse, and St. Louis), and Democratic mayors from North Carolina, Kentucky, Indiana, and California.

Testimony in opposition to HR 10440 came from the National Association of Manufacturers, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, and the American Farm Bureau. Conservative Southern Democrats and Republicans also opposed the measure. Issues centered on the issue of state control, the huge discretionary powers of Sargent Shriver as Director of the OEO, and the existence of other poverty programs which the bill duplicated.

Coalition of conservative Republicans were led by Rep. Peter Frelinghuysen (R-NY), ranking minority member of the education committee. Landrum, the sponsor, pushed through a compromise bill after House floor action was delayed two months by the conservative coalition.

Senate action:

S. 2642 introduced by Senator Patrick McNamara (D-MI) and 35 others and referred to the Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, March 16, 1964.

* Hearings held June 17, 18, 23, and 25
* Reported with amendments, Senate Report #1218, July 8, 1964
* Supplemental Senate Report #1218, July 22, 1964 (minority views)
* Debated in Senate July 21-23, 1964
* Amended and passed Senate, July 23, 1964 by a 61-34 vote
* Senate concurs to House amendments, August 11 (voice)
* Signed by President Lyndon B. Johnson on August 20, 1964
* Public Law 88-452 (Title II, Part B: Adult Basic Education Programs)

Senate committee heard from same witnesses as House. Key players were the sponsor, and a conservative coalition of Republicans, led by Senator Barry Goldwater (R-AR).

HR 11377 contained language providing basic literacy training for adults 22 years of age and older. while S. 2642 contained age limit of 18. House receded to Senate (in incremental decision) in conference.

House bill had an expanded purpose of the purposes of pilot projects. Senate receded in incremental decision (tradeoff).

Purpose of Title II, Part B:

To initiate programs of instruction for persons at least 18 years old whose inability to read or write the English language constitutes a substantial impairment of their ability to obtain or retain employment.

Provisions:

The Director of the Office of Economic Opportunity was authorized to make grants to states to assist in the establishment of pilot projects by local educational agencies to demonstrate, test or develop special materials or methods of instruction for raising adult basic educational skills. The pilot projects were to encourage colleges and universities to develop instructional materials and to assist in developing programs of specialized training for teachers of educationally deprived adults. Each state was required to submit a state plan to provide for the administration of the program by the state educational agency.

The federal share for the program was set at 90 percent for FY66 and 50 percent for FY67.

Adult Education Act of 1966

House action:

HR 13161 introduced by Rep. Carl Perkins (D-KY) March 1, 1966 and referred to Committee on Education and Labor
* Hearings held March 7-23, 1966
* House Report #1814 filed August 5, 1966 (with amendments)
* Supplement Report #1814, Part 2, filed August 27, 1966
* Debated in House, October 5-6, 1966
* Amended and passed the House October 6, 1966, 237-97
* Agreed to conference report on October 20, 185-76

Senate action:

S. 3046 (companion measure to HR 13161) introduced by Senator Wayne Morse (D-Ore) March 1, 1966, and referred to Senate Labor and Public Welfare Committee
* Hearings held April 1-27, 1966
* Senate Report #1674 filed October 3, 1966
* Amended and passed S. 3046 on October 6, 1966, 54-16
* Amended and passed HR 13161 on October 7 by voice vote
* Agreed to conference report (H. Report 2309) on October 19 by voice vote of Senate
* Signed into law November 3, 1966 by President Johnson (PL 89-750, Title III)

At President's request Congress enacted HR 13161 -- PL 89-750 which expanded the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (PL 89-10). The bill transferred the adult basic education program authorized under Title II-B of the Economic Opportunity Act to the Commissioner of Education and repealed the poverty law.

The Senate version of S. 15111 -- The Economic Opportunity Amendments of 1966, PL 89-794, laid the groundwork for the program's transfer to the Office of Education. Testimony came from the National Education Association, National Association for Public School Adult Education, the superintendent of New York City Schools, and the state directors of adult education. A House Republican Policy Committee report August 23 also recommended that this program be moved to the Office of Education to reduce fragmentation of education programs among various agencies. This language was later added to S. 3046 during subcommittee action and kept in the conference report (when the House receded as they had no counterpart). Rational model approach was used with incremental outcome.

Purpose of Title III (PL 89-750):

To encourage and expand basic educational programs for adults (who do not have a certificate of graduation from secondary school and who are not currently enrolled) to enable them to

overcome English language limitations, to improve their basic education in preparation for occupational training and more profitable employment, and to become more productive and responsible citizens.

Provisions:

Federal share for each state was maintained at 90 percent of the cost of establishing or expanding programs.

The Commissioner of Education was given the authority to reserve 20 percent of the funds for special demonstration projects and teacher training in order to promote a comprehensive and coordinated approach in instructing persons with basic educational deficiencies.

In order to receive funds, each state (the state educational agency) was required to submit a state plan which provided for cooperation with community action programs, work experience programs, VISTA, work study, and other programs related to the anti-poverty effort as well as grants to public and nonprofit agencies for special projects, teacher training, and research.

An eight-member National Advisory Committee on Adult Basic Education was established (chaired by the Commissioner) to advise the commissioner in preparing general regulations and policy matters, and coordinating program funds with other adult education activities and services.

1968 Amendments to the Adult Education Act

House and Senate Action:

HR 7819 introduced by Rep. John Brademas (D-IN) April 3, 1967 and referred to the Committee on Education and Labor.

* House Report #185 filed May 11, 1967
* Debated in House May 22-24, 1967
* Amended and passed the House, May 24, 1967
* Referred to Senate Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, May 31, 1967
* Senate Report #726 filed November 6, 1967
* Debated in Senate, December 1-11, 1967
* Amended and passed Senate, December 11, 1967
* Conference Report (H. Report #1049) agreed to by House, December 15, 1967
* Conference Report agreed to by Senate, December 15, 1967
* Signed by President Johnson, January 2, 1968, PL 90-247, (Title IV)

House bill added language to authorize private nonprofit agencies as eligible adult education grant recipients (to increase participation in program) and Senate receded; it had had no comparable provision. Incremental strategy, incremental

outcome.

1970 Amendments to the Adult Education Act

House and Senate action:
HR 514 introduced by Rep. Carl Perkins (D-KY) January 3, 1969 and referred to Committee on Education and Labor
* Hearings held in March, 1969
* House Report #114 filed March 24, 1969
* Debated in House, April 21-22, 1969
* Passed the House, April 23, 1969
* Referred to the Senate Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, April 25, 1969
* Reported with amendments, Senate Report #634, January 21, 1970
* Debated in Senate, February 14-19, 1970
* Amended and passed Senate, February 19, 1970, 80-0
* Conference Report, House Report #937 agreed to by Senate on April 1, 74-4
* Conference report agreed to by House on April 7, 312-58
* Signed by President Nixon April 13, 1970, Pl 91-230, Title III

Provisions:

The Senate bill amended the Adult Education Act of 1966 to include secondary-level education programs for adults (defined as 16) who had not completed high school and increased from 8 to 15, membership of National Advisory Council (rather than Committee) on Adult Education. The House had no similar provisions and agreed to the Senate version.

The conferees agreed to authorize an additional appropriation, of up to five percent, to pay the cost of administering and developming the state plans. Senate bill had 7.5% In addition, conferees agreed to split the difference between the House version for a two-year authorization and the Senate version for four years.

These changes reflected incremental policy and incremental outcome.

1972 Amendments to the Adult Education Act

House and Senate Action:

* S. 659 introduced by Senator Claiborne Pell (D-RI) and 13 others on February 8, 1971 and referred to the Committee on Labor and Public Welfare.
* Senate Report #92-346 filed August 3, 1971
* Debated in Senate, August 4-6, 1971
* Passed the Senate August 6, 1971
* Referred to the House Committee on Education and Labor,

August 8, 1971
* House Report #92-554 filed November 1, 1971
* Passed the House with amendment (in lieu of HR 7248), November 4, 1971
* Reported to Senate with an amendment, Senate Report #92-604, February 7, 1972
* Debated in Senate, February 22-March 1, 1972
* Senate agrees to House amendment, March 1, 1972
* Conference Report (Senate Report #92-798) filed May 18, 1972
* Senate agrees to conference report May 24, 1972, 63-15
* House agrees to conference report June 8, 1972, 218-180
* Signed by President Nixon June 23, 1972, PL 92-318 (Title IV, Part C)

Senate version of bill added a new section to improve the educational opportunities for adult Indians. Funds were authorized to support programs of basic literacy and high school equivalency, and programs to improve the employment and educational opportunities for adult Indians. The House, having no similar provision, receded. An incremental strategy and incremental outcome were shown, especially as the Indians were already eligible for the ABE program. Its main purpose was to appease the Indians by doing something.

In 1971 the Senate had approved the Indian Education Act of 1971 (S. 2482). The House took no action on the bill in 1971. The Senate then added the provisions of S. 2482 to S. 659. The senate education committee report (approved 12-0) concluded "our national policies for educating American Indians are a failure of major proportions. They have not offered Indian children ...an educational opportunity equal to that of American children." Senator Pell, chief sponsor and floor manager, was instrumental in maintaining the Senate language during the conference report on S. 659.

In addition, President Nixon issued two major domestic proposals, welfare reform and revenue sharing. An education revenue sharing bill was proposed by the Administration (to turn education programs into a block grant) but the proposals were ignored by a Democratically-controlled Congress.

1974 Amendments to the Adult Education Act

HR 69 introduced by Rep. Carl Perkins (D-KY) January 3, 1973, and referred to Committee on Education and Labor.
* House Report #93-805 (with amendments) filed, February 21, 1974
* Debated in House March 21 and March 26, 1974
* Passed House March 27, 1974
* Referred to Senate Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, March 27, 1974
* Debated in Senate, May 8-16, 1974
* Passed Senate in lieu of S. 1539 (Senate Report #93-1026), May 20, 1974

* Conference Report (House Report #93-1211) filed July 23, 1974
* House agrees to conference report, July 24, 1974, 323-83
* Senate agrees to conference report, July 31, 1974, 81-15
* Signed by President Ford August 21, 1974, PL 93-380 (Title VI, Part A)

The 1974 amendments set expenditures of up to 20% each for adult secondary programs and programs for institutionalized adults; up to 15% for special demonstration projects and teacher training; established a Clearinghouse on Adult Education; required that special emphasis be given to persons with limited English-speaking ability and the elderly; required states to establish advisory councils; dictated that persons with special knowledge and experience in education for adults of limited English-speaking ability be members of the National Advisory Council; added definition of community school program.

Setasides for special groups were established so that the program could maintain its purpose of focusing on persons most in need. House bill had higher setasides for special groups than Senate and conferees split the difference. House bill repealed the Commissioner's authority to determine how money for the special projects would be spent (State directors of adult education testified that they wanted more (local) control over the money and were dissatified over the priorities established by the Commissioner in selecting projects.) while Senate bill reduced special project amount from 20% to 15%. The Senate receded to the House on the Commissioner's authority; the House receded on the 15%

The Senate bill broadened the list of eligible recipients in Commissioner's discretionary fund to include agencies conducting community programs and added definition of community school. The House receded (it had no provision) but said community services must be related to educational, recreational, and cultural services.

The Senate bill established a National Clearinghouse to collect and disseminate adult education information (the House did not). Compromise reached by conferees was to establish a clearinghouse within the office of Education (Senate bill established it as a separate agency).

Senate said special emphasis should be given to ESL (English as a second language) programs. House receded (it had no provision).

President Nixon proposed replacing the expiring Act with an educational revenue-sharing program consolidating 32 categorical programs into five broad areas. House Education and Labor Committee had lengthy hearings which revealed "distate" for proposal among educators (and Congressmen). No action was taken.

Incremental strategy proposed by Congress (fundamental change proposed by Administration) with incremental outcome.

1978 Amendments to the Adult Education Act

HR 15 introduced by Rep. Carl Perkins (D-KY) January 4, 1977 and referred to Committee on Education and Labor.

S. 1753 introduced by Senator Claiborne Pell (D-RI) on June 24, 1977 and referred to Committee on Labor and Human Resources.

HR 11282, Administration's bill, introduced by Rep. Perkins, March 3, 1978

* Hearings held on H. 15, May 10, 1977-March 6, 1978
* Hearings held on S. 1753, October 4-November 4, 1977; March 18, 1978
* HR 15 passed House, July 13, 1978, 350-20
* S. 1753 considered in Senate, August 15, 1977
* HR 15 amended, passed by Senate (in lieu of S. 1753), August 24, 1978, 86-7
* Senate agrees to conference report (#95-856) October 12, 1978
* House agrees to conference report (#95-1137), October 15, 1978
* Signed by President Carter November 1, 1978, PL 95-561 (Title XIII, Part A)

State plan was broadened and became more prescriptive in an attempt to increase the underserved segments of population. Testimony and state reports presented on S. 1753 (including testimony from Secretary of HEW) showed that the school-based ABE program has not attracted the elderly, Indians, and Indochinese. The Senate bill attempted to prescribe methods for reaching these groups.

The Senate bill expanded the ABE delivery system to include business, labor, libraries, colleges, and communtiy organizations in order to make entry into the program more convenient and attractive to clients and added language emphasizing special needs of Indochinese and adult immigrants. House had no provision and receded to Senate.

House bill contained language changing setaside for special demonstration and teacher training projects from 15 percent to 10 percent at request of state directors of adult education who testified that many of the needs had been met in these special projects, quality could be maintained at 10%, and the %5 could be better spent in other ways; to allow for three-year state plan, rather than one-year. Senate had no provision and receded to House.

Incremental strategy with incremental outcome.

1984 Amendments to the Adult Education Act
HR 11 introduced by Rep. Carl Perkins (D-KY) on January 3, 1983
* Reported out of Education and Labor Committee, May 15, 1984 (House Report #98-748)
* Passed House, as amended, July 26, 1984, 307-85
* House laid it on table and incorporated language of HR 11 as amendment to S. 2496, July 26, 1984

S. 2496 introduced by Senator Dan Quayle (R-IN) on March 29, 1984
* Reported out of Labor and Human Resources Committee, May 23
* Senate Report #98-503 filed June 6, 1984
* Passed Senate June 28, 1984, voice vote
* Senate disagrees to House amendments on September 28, 19844
* Conference report #98-1128 filed October 2, 1984
* Passed Senate October 3, 1984, voice
* Passed House October 4, 1984, voice
* Signed by President Ronald Reagan, October 19, 1984, PL 98-511 (Title I)

On September 7, 1983, President Reagan and Secretary of Education Terrell Bell announced the Secretary's Initiative on Adult Literacy to encourage greater participation in literacy activities by the private sector, literacy organizations, and citizens volunteering to help tutor adults in the comunity. The Administration also requested additional funding for the college work/study program to put more college students to work in tutoring positions. Despite the fact that the Administration cited reports showing that 23 million Americans are functionally illiterate, no new money was proposed for the ABE program which represents the large single adult basic skills program in the country.

At the President's request, Senator Quayle, along with other members of the education committee, introduced the Administration's proposal as S. 2496, designed to simplify requirements and streamline the program. The House proposed a simple five year extension.

The Senate bill amended the purpose to emphasize that adults will acquire basic literacy skills and the means to secure training and education. The House receded.

The Senate bill changed the definition of adult to one who is 16 or older or "who is beyond the age of compulsory school attendance under state law" to expand the eligible population. Three states have compulsory school attendance ages under 16. The House receded.

The Senate bill amended the law to allow private, for-profit agencies and institutions to carry out ABE programs. The House receded, adding qualifying statement, in cases where "such institutions can make a significant contribution in

attaining the objectives of the Act."

Senate bill revised state's base allocation from $100,000 to $150,000. The House receded.

The Senate repealed language authorizing special projects for the elderly and adult immigrants (which were never funded). The House receded.

The Senate eliminated the National Clearinghouse (it was not being utilized by adult educators and was not cost-effective), authorizing the Secretary to support research, development, and demonstration projects in the areas of educational technology, the elderly, adult immigrants, and cooperative programs with businesses, schools, and community organizations. The House receded.

President Reagan's literacy proposal, encouraing the use of volunteers, rather than providing additional money, is typical of a Republican Administration. However, it is a distinct change from his proposals in the 97th and 98th Congress to turn the categorical adult education program into a Vocational and Adult Education Block Grant. These proposals were never seriously considered by the Democratically-controlled House or Republican-controlled Senate which illustrates the strength of the constituency from not only public assistance, social service agency, business, industry, and labor personnel, and directors of audlt education, but also from key members of Congress (Rep. Perkins and Senator Pell).

Amendments of 1984 represented incremental strategy with incremental outcome.

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